



The **Los Alamos Postdoc Association** is run by postdocs, for postdocs.

Spring 2023

What is LAPA about?



Our mission is to foster and develop an inclusive, welcoming, and empowering environment among the postdoctoral research community at Los Alamos National Laboratory. In pursuit of this goal, LAPA works to

- provide resources to help postdocs excel professionally,
- curate opportunities for living fulfilling lives outside of work,
- build community and jumpstart collaborations,
- advocate for underserved and underrepresented populations,
- and be a resource for postdocs' transition into early career scientists.

When postdocs feel supported, it shows: improving quality of life personally and professionally across the lab ultimately helps to strengthen scientific research outcomes and fulfill the lab agenda in mission, vision, and culture.

Note: as a postdoc at LANL, you are automatically a member of the Los Alamos Postdoc Association and have access to all benefits, information, and events free of charge.

We're Online!

Get involved wherever you are— from Los Alamos to Santa Fe and Albuquerque, find us in person and online!



Facebook: Postdocs at Los Alamos



LAPA internal webpage



Discord

LAPA Officers (November – April 2023)

LAPA Officers

If you want to be more involved with the postdoc program, consider running for an elected officer position in LAPA. Elections are held biannually in April and November.

President

Sets overall direction for LAPA, delegates tasks, and ensures continuity of overarching goals and ideas.

Vice President

Monitors and enforces intra-organizational structures and procedures ensuring LAPA runs smoothly and efficiently.

Secretary

Schedules, plans, and documents internal organization activities.

Communications Chair

Communicates with general postdoc population via weekly bulletin emails and developing the LAPA biannual newsletter.

Social Chairs

Organizes LAPA social events in Santa Fe and Los Alamos.

New Positions

Treasurer

Maintains funding or financial resources for LAPA.

Outreach Chair

Engages the community, including both non-postdoc LANL employees and broader groups.

Resource Chair

Manages tools and data related to LAPA, such as producing the annual Postdoc Climate Survey.

Advocacy Chair

Summarizes work from other committees to produce recommendations, goals, and requests.

Modified Positions

Student Outreach and Social Media Chairs

Replaced/absorbed by outreach chair (see above).

Foreign National and Family Liaisons

Both liaisons are no longer elected positions, instead they are solicited positions serving within the outreach committee. The Foreign National Liaison acts as LAPA's point of contact for foreign nationals, and is responsible for advocating on their behalf during officer meetings. The Family Liaison acts in a similar fashion for LAPA members with families.

President

Aaron Pital, C-DEC

Vice President

Theresa Kucinski, MPA-CINT

Secretary

Jesse Callanan, MPA-CINT

Communications

Ibrahim Abdurrahman, T2

Student Outreach Chair

Vignesh Chandrasekaran,

MPA-Q

Foreign National Chair

Lampros Svolos, T-3

Social Media

Maria Kosmidou, MST-8

Family Liaison

Kristina Meier, MPA-Q

Social Chairs

Los Alamos:

Jason Rizk, MST-8

Santa Fe:

Jonah Duch, MST-16

Who are LANL Postdocs?

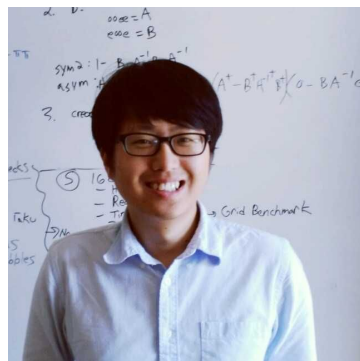
Meet Dr. Jun-Sik Yoo:

Junsik was born and raised in Changwom, Korea, a town nationally famous for its cherry blossom festival. He attended Seoul National University as an undergraduate, Stony Brook as a graduate student, and completed his first postdoc at KEK in Japan. In his free time he likes to go hiking, sightseeing, weightlifting, play video games (the Witcher 3, Uncharted, and Hearthstone are among his favorites), and more. One of his favorite activities is fishing, which he picked up during his time in New York.

For research, he studies Lattice QCD, a theoretical framework for understanding quarks and the strong nuclear interaction. His interest in physics started in middle and high school, when he became fascinated by the movement of characters in video games. He started to wonder if such movements were physically possible, and decided to major in physics. In undergrad he became interested QCD, and fundamental physics in general. He was attracted to the simplicity of lattice gauge theory, and how such a conceptually easy to understand model could be applied to a problem as complex as QCD.

Since then he has applied himself to a wide range of problems involving QCD, including but not limited to, predicting a lower time bound for proton decay, understanding the neutron electric dipole moment, and investigating the hadron spectrum. His work is extremely interdisciplinary, requiring experimental collaborations, high performance computing skills, machine learning, statistical techniques, and more. In this sense, Los Alamos was an ideal location for him to take his second postdoc.

Although originally not on his radar, after accepting a job in the lab, Junsik was pleasantly impressed by the quality of the personnel. He found everyone was available and willing to engage in intellectual discussions. Additionally, within his group, senior members were very willing to help him settle in when he first moved here. One complaint he has is the size of Los Alamos. As a Korean he has to drive over 2 hours to get Korean Groceries, and flights back to South Korea involve a few too many stops. And also, for an American town, Los Alamos does not have too many burger joints to choose from (McDonalds does not count). As a concluding remark, he was asked to describe experience at LANL in one word to which he responded: stimulating.



Have a Good Story to Tell?

Want to introduce yourself to the lab via a spot in the next newsletter? Send an email to lapa_officers@lanl.gov with the subject line *LAPA Story*.

Any Jokes Also?

Got a killer joke to tell and dying for someone to hear to it? Send it to lapa_officers@lanl.gov with the subject line *LAPA Jokes*. As you can see below, we can really use some help!

Laughing with LAPA

Two up quarks and one down quark nervously exit a store. Growing suspicious, a nearby police officer decides to approach them. He turns to the first one

"I have never stolen anything in my life, please let me go," the quark pleads.

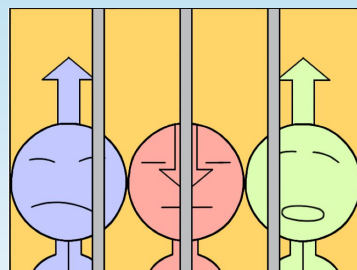
"We will see," the officer says, before searching him. When reaching into his left pocket, the officer finds unpaid goods, and arrests him. He then confronts the second one.

"I have never committed a crime in my life, I'm innocent!" the second quark bursts out.

"Let's find out," the officer responds, before searching him. When reaching into his right pocket the officer finds counterfeit money and arrests him. Annoyed he turns to the third quark who remains calmly silent.

"Nothing to say?" the officer remarks, before searching him. The officer finds nothing, but to his surprise the last quark jumps into the backseat of the police car next to his two friends. Bewildered the officer asks why.

"Sorry, I'm confined," the quark responds.



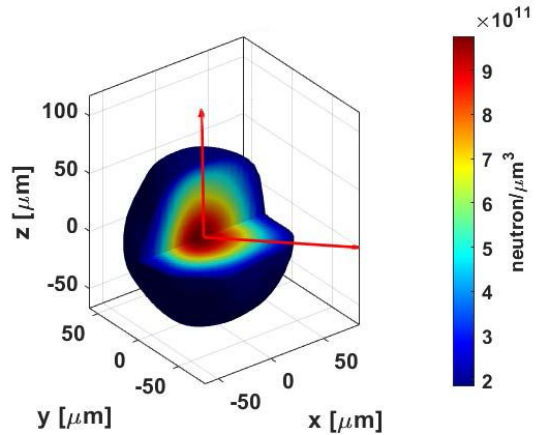
Postdoc Research Highlights

Experimental Highlight:

Fusion

Dr. Mora Duchor is a current LANL postdoctoral researcher in the P1 division. Her research focuses on analyzing shots from the National Ignition Facility (NIF) related to Inertial Confinement Fusion (ICF). This includes reconstructing nuclear imaging suite (NIS) raw data, and analyzing/interpreting the data.

NIF is attempting to create fusion power, which if achieved would likely solve the world's energy problems. Shown to the right is the neutron density profile of a breakthrough fusion ignition shot. This shot was impressive since more energy was created from the fusion reactions (3.15 MJ) than the lasers used to start the process (2.05 MJ).



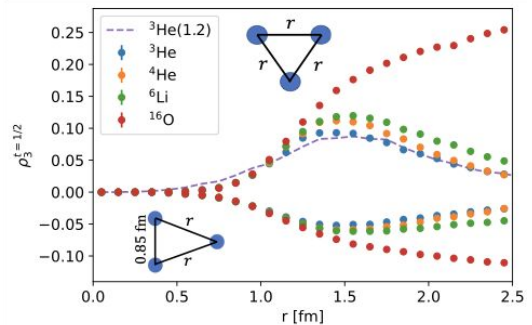
NIF shot taken on December 4th 2022.

Theory Highlight:

Nuclear Theory

Dr. Ronen Weiss is a current LANL postdoctoral researcher in the T2 division. Part of his research focuses on investigating short-range correlations (SRCs) between nucleons, or in other words, correlations between few nucleons packed close together inside a nucleus. While working for LANL he is focusing on studying SRCs for triplets of nucleons, of which little is currently known relative to SRCs for pairs. Such studies can aid ongoing experimental efforts to measure the properties and effects of nuclear triplets.

The figure on the right shows the probability to find triplets in different geometries, in this case a equilateral or isosceles triangles (multiplied by -1), for various nuclei.



Monte Carlo calculations of the three-body density of isospin-half triplets for various nuclei. For more information see: [arXiv:2301.09605 \[nucl-th\]](https://arxiv.org/abs/2301.09605).

Want to be Featured?

Do you or someone you know have interesting research to share? Why not be highlighted in the next newsletter! Send research highlights to lapa_officers@lanl.gov with the subject line *LAPA Newsletter Research Highlights*.

Science in "3"

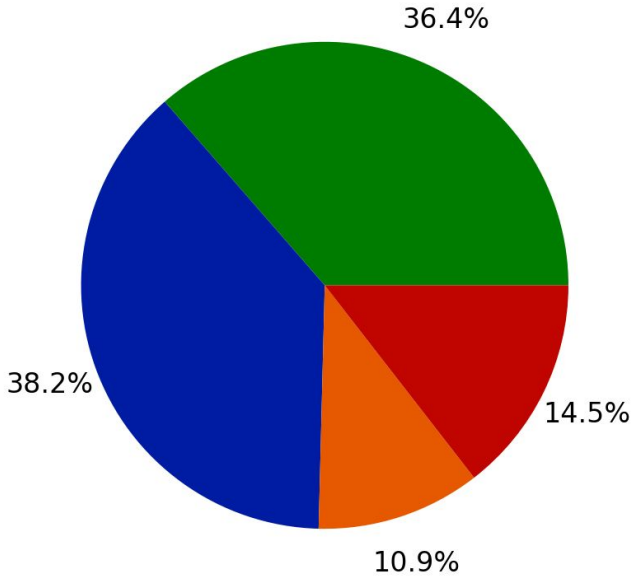
Science in "3" is an annual LANL postdoc research competition, where postdocs present a 3-minute-long lightning talk to a general audience, after which a review panel consisting of former/current laboratory fellows, senior lab directors, professors, technical experts, and more, judge the presentations with an emphasis on clarity, audience engagement, and effectiveness in conveying key ideas. This event gives postdocs a chance to improve their presentation skills, showcase their work to lab management and influential community members, and receive useful feedback from established scientists.



Summer 2019 Science in "3" event.

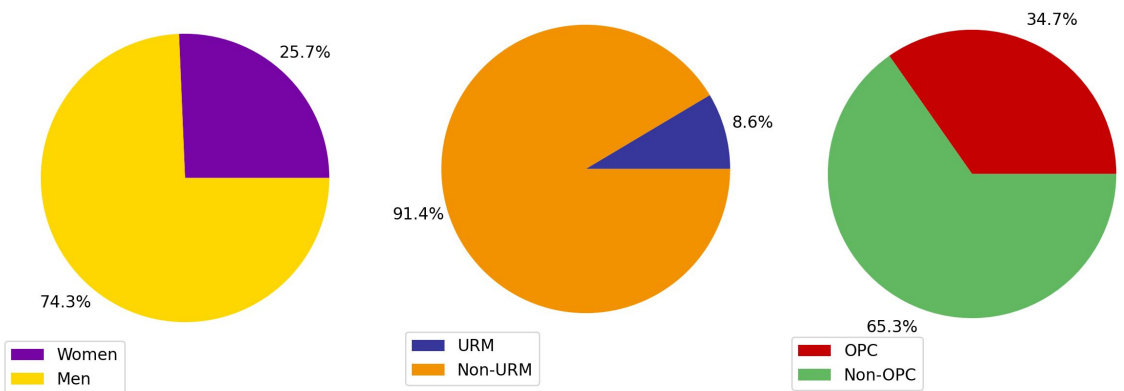
LAPA Spring 2023 Climate Survey Results:

How do you feel about your postdoc experience at LANL so far? (55 responses)



- I've enjoyed/am enjoying my experience.
- Overall it's been rewarding, but there are a few things I wish were different.
- It's been OK; it's been valuable in some ways.
- It hasn't been great; I wish many things were different.

LANL Postdoc Demographic Information:



URM: Under-Represented Minorities (e.g.: African American/Black, Hispanic/Latino, and American Indian/Alaskan Native)

OPC: Other People of Color (e.g.: Asian/Asian American and Pacific Islanders)

For more information see: <https://lanl.jobs/creative/about-diversity>.

Skill Building

LAPA Postdoc Skills Workshop: Equitable Meeting Facilitation

December 7

MSL Auditorium

LAPA regularly runs professional development events, such as a workshop on equitable meeting facilitation, where techniques were covered on how to facilitate useful discussions at meetings involving groups with diverse communication styles and variable sizes.

LAPA Monthly General Assembly for April Elections, Featuring Guest Speaker Dr. Iyer Srinivas

May 24rd

MSL Auditorium

LAPA hosted a special edition monthly general assembly featuring guest speaker Dr. Srinivas, program director for the Office of Science, who was able to give postdocs an in-depth look into the Office of Science, the structure of LANL, funding opportunities, and more.



Inside LANSCE.

Touring the Lab

Throughout last summer and fall, postdocs had a chance to tour some of LANL's most advanced areas including MAGLAB, CINT, DARHT, and LANSCE!

Want to feature your lab?

Send us an email to lapa_officers@lanl.gov with the subject line *LAPA tours*.

Volunteering

Postdocs at the lab regularly give back to the community by volunteering their free time at events/program such as *Challenge Tomorrow*, a mobile STEM experience, where kids in neighboring communities get hands on experience doing science; *Young Professional Build Day* hosted by *Habitat for Humanity*, where families in need partner with volunteers to build their own homes, and *STEM Scaffold Santa Fe*, which pairs middle and high school kids with trained STEM professional mentors to supplement the students' STEM education.



Challenge Tomorrow.

Get involved!

Interested in volunteering?

Check the LAPA *Weekly Bulletin* in your email inbox every week for ongoing volunteer opportunities in Los Alamos, Espanola, Santa Fe and Albuquerque. For more details, check out the Community Partnerships Office website and calendar.

Socials and Festivities

LAPA frequently hosts social events for both new and old postdocs to socialize, mingle, and fun together!

Event Highlights:

LAPA's Bi-Monthly Welcome Lunch

LAPA's welcome lunches are open for all postdocs, but are an especially great opportunity for new hires to make connections, ask questions, and get to chat with current officers!

Desert Dogs Trivia

LAPA routinely hosts trivia in Santa Fe, at the biweekly *Pub Trivia at: Desert Dogs Brewery and Cidery*. Stop by to test your skills with questions range from pop culture to world events, science, and more!

World Cup Viewing Party

In December LAPA hosted a viewing party for world cup knock matches between the Netherlands and the US, and Argentina and Australia, held in Los Alamos at Pajarito Brew Pub and Grill.

Galentines Day Event

One day prior to Valentine's Day, LAPA hosted Galentine's day, where postdocs gathered for lunch and to make cards to celebrate women who positively influenced their lives.

LAPA trip to House of Eternal Return

In April LAPA hosted a trip to Meow Wolf's House of Eternal Return, a uniquely immersive art experience, featuring over 70 thematic rooms to explore!

LAPA also regularly hosts potlucks, hikes, rock climbing, yoga, and more!

Tsankawi Hike



Trip to House of Eternal Return



International Potluck



World Cup Viewing Party



Postdoc Program Office (PPO)

The LANL Postdoctoral (Postdoc) Program offers the opportunity for appointees to perform research in a scientifically rich research and development environment; present and publish research; and contribute to the research efforts at the Laboratory, the advancement of knowledge in the areas of basic and applied research, and the strengthening of our national scientific and technical capabilities.

https://int.lanl.gov/employees/postdoc-program/_assets/docs/postdoc-program-brochure1.pdf

Professional Development:

The PPO regularly runs seminars, workshops, and other events targeted for postdocs to prepare them for careers after their term ends. A few such events are included below.

Career Development Consultations

February 8

The PPO offers designated office hours, where Dr. Jacquilyn Weeks will work with postdocs on any subject related to: writing journal articles, grants, user proposals, revising a CV, delivering a presentation, and more.

PPO Seminar: Improving your Professional Presentations

February 15

The PPO hosted a one day, four-part series, detailing tips and techniques for making and delivering a great professional presentation.

PPO CV and Resume Writing Workshop

March 1

This workshop covered the basics of both Resume and CV writing. It focused on how to highlight important skills and work experience for both documents, as well as construct a strong narrative in a Resume in order to land jobs in the industrial, academic, and government job sectors.

PPO Seminar: Acing the Interview for Industry

March 8

The PPO hosted a 1.5 hr seminar on how to prepare for industry interviews. The workshop focused on understanding the interviewer, preparing for common interview questions, and help the interviewee project confidence through all stages of the interview process.



Left to right: Antonya Sanders, Cindy Hines, and Kristin Kalangis.

Meet The Staff

Antonya Sanders

PPO program manager

I am responsible for the overall strategy and planning of the Postdoc Program Office. In this role, I am here to look at the overall health of the program, identify strategy and goals, and be a liaison and resource for all postdocs, mentors and managers. We are in the middle of the Postdoc Spot Offer Pilot, where we can get an offer out quickly to postdoc candidates who have competing offers or other time sensitive needs. We are also drafting guidance around postdoc performance reviews and career path conversations to be rolled out in the fall. Please don't hesitate to reach out to our office. We are here for you.

Cindy Hines

PPO program coordinator

I am responsible for many of the day to day operations of the Postdoc Program Office. My role focuses on program processes, including handling postdoc packages, extensions, directed transfers and being the main point of contact with the LDRD office for fellow appointments.

I am excited to begin working with other LANL colleagues on a new online system for processing postdoc packages and extensions, creating major efficiencies for our office and those working with us.

Kristin Kalangis

PPO career development specialist

New to LANL, and a second generation New Mexican, I am thrilled to be a part of the dynamic Postdoc office team. I am currently helping develop, and augment, mentor and mentee training, as well as postdoc orientation information and support. With a background in anthropology and education, I am excited to learn and grow current and possible career development options and opportunities centered around the communication of postdoc experiences, needs, and wishes. I am very excited to be in a different type of 'classroom' with brilliant, curious, and creative people.



LAPA Officers

LAPA Spring/Summer 2023 Officers



President
Jason Rizk
MST-8



**Vice President/
Treasurer**
Jesse Callanan
MPA-CINT



**Social Chair (Los
Alamos)**
Allie Nagelski
C-IIAC



Communications Chair
Ibrahim Abdurrahman
T-2



Resource Chair
Aaron Pital
C-CDE



Outreach Chair
Vignesh Chandrasekaran
MPA-Q



Foreign National Liaison
Adam Altenhof
MPA-Q



**Social Chair
(Santa Fe)**
Charles Fricke
MST-16

Officer Election Statements

President Statement

"I believe LAPA has a greater impact on the LANL community and mission than many of us realize. The postdocs here never cease to amaze me, and my goal is to turn their many great ideas into reality."

Vice President Statement

"LAPA is in a unique position to serve the lab-wide postdoc community in both professional and social contexts. I'm excited to have the opportunity to be involved, to continue to advocate for all postdocs here at LANL, and to push the laboratory to fulfill its values of teamwork and inclusive staff engagement."

Communications Chair Statement

"LAPA is a great resource for postdocs. As the communications chair, I want to help expose it to as many people as possible. As a specific goal for this term, I plan to improve the Newsletter to better highlight the accomplishments of both LAPA and the general LANL postdoc population."

Social Chair (Los Alamos) Statement

"Community can significantly enhance one's postdoctoral experience and therefore should be nurtured accordingly to ensure that everyone feels included and supported in their time at LANL. Through this role with LAPA, I hope to bring people together to make Los Alamos feel a bit more familiar and friendly to both new and old faces."

Bigger community, more connections:

National Postdoc Association Membership

Are you a member of the National Postdoc Association? Membership (usually \$35/year) is FREE through LANL! As a member, you'll have access to periodic NPA news, members-only web content, leadership and professional development opportunities, and so much more.